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INFO RUEHTV/AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV 0001
RUEHKUK/REO KIRKUK 0512

S E C R E T KIRKUK 000012

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E.O. 12958: DECL: 1/28/2016
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POL-MIL, NCT
SUBJECT: (C) KRG UNIFICATION: TWO YEARS TO FORM NEW SECURITY SERVICE

REF: (A) KIRKUK 8, (B) 05 KIRKUK 301

CLASSIFIED BY: RBELL, PRC, PRC, DOS.
REASON: 1.4 (b), (d)

11. (S) SUMMARY AND INTRODUCTION. Kurdistan Regional Government-Sulaymaniyah (KRG-S) PM Omar Fattah told RC and DRC January 26 he expected the two main Kurdish parties to name a PM and a Deputy PM for a unified KRG in the next few days so the Kurds could present a unified face in Baghdad. PUK Deputy GenSec Noshirwan Mustafa suggested privately that the Kurds should get Israeli advice about merging party militias into a state army. The parties plan to create a new KRG security service over the next two years (now, the PUK and KDP each have their own intelligence services). The PM stood by his earlier view that the U.S. should not cover Sulaymaniyah through a future Regional Reconstruction Team in Erbil. END SUMMARY AND INTRODUCTION.

12. (C) KRG-S Prime Minister Omar Fattah told RC and DRC January 26 he expected the two Kurdish parties to name a PM and a Deputy PM for a unified KRG in the next few days. He thought it important to name the unified KRG leadership soon, so the Kurds would present a unified face in the negotiations to form a national government. (NOTE: A PUK source told our LES that Arslan Baiz, head of the PUK office in Erbil, had been chosen to fill the DPM slot; Fattah had been the obvious first choice, but it would be a demotion for him. END NOTE.)

13. (S) Fattah pointed both to technical problems and a lack of trust in explaining why the Peshmerga, interior, justice and finance ministries are not to be unified for a year (ref A). The Erbil and Sulaymaniyah ministries of justice had issued conflicting regulations; the Kurdistan National Assembly needed to resolve this. Similarly, the finance ministries had issued two different budgets for the year. The two Peshmerga still distrusted each other. PUK Deputy GenSec Noshirwan Mustafa later told us the Kurds should get Israeli advice on how to merge hostile militias, since they had to deal with Haganah, Irgun and Stern.

14. (C) The PM explained that the two main parties planned to create a new KRG security service. This process is expected to take two years. KRG-S Interior Minister Othman Haji Mahmud (whom PUK expects to stay on as interior minister for the unified KRG) told us the two parties had agreed the KRG President would create a committee to form the new security service and vet personnel for it. Othman envisaged recruiting college graduates, and asked for U.S. assistance in creating such a neutral, professional security service. It was not clear whether the new service would replace or augment the current separate PUK and KDP Asayish (intelligence/security) services.

15. (SBU) As he had in December (ref B), the PM continued to

insist that the U.S. should not cover Sulaymaniyah through a future Regional Reconstruction Team in Erbil, but should deal separately with Sulaymaniyah.

16. (S) COMMENT: The two Kurdish parties want KRG unification to be seen to take effect quickly, so as to help them in Baghdad negotiations. Nevertheless, the devil remains in the details. Uniting the rival Peshmerga and Asayish will be particularly problematic. Both parties recruit their own loyalists. The Kurdistan Democratic Party measures loyalty on a clan basis, while the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan takes a more political approach.

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